

And on that memorable day, about 400 people from the immediate vicinity and near-by towns, gathered to witness the unveiling and dedication of this monument. At the cemetery a brief history of the first settlers and the early ministers was given by the chairman, E. M. Peck. [A fragment of this text by E. M. Peck is extant.] After repairing [to] the church auditorium Sheldon Norton gave an interesting and instructive address on his boyhood recollections of these pioneer settlers.

At his [Sheldon Norton's] suggestion, it was voted to set apart a day each year for meeting to commemorate the early settlers. It has been subsequently celebrated, on Labor Day [at Clinton Center Baptist Church] for the last two decades. [Beginning in 1920, Pioneer Day celebrations were held on Labor Day. Before 1920, a fixed date for the annual celebration was not established: in 1916 Pioneer Day was celebrated on Friday, September 1, for example.]

PIONEER DAY OFFICERS

The first president of Pioneer Day was Earl Melville Peck, the first vice president was W. E. Rude. Following the death of Earl Melville Peck, on November 19, 1923, W. E. Rude was elected President, and Earl Melville Peck's son, Emmons L. Peck, was elected vice-president. This information about the presidents and vice presidents of Pioneer Day was learned from the minutes of the 1941 Pioneer Day celebration. Contained in those minutes is a text entitled, "In Appreciation," written by Lois (Norton) Curtis. The first paragraph of that text reads as follows: "Twenty-six years ago 'Pioneer Day' was first established with E. M. Peck as President and W. E. Rude as Vice Pres. After the passing of E. M. Peck to his eternal Home in 1923, W. E. Rude was elected Pres. and Mr. Peck's son, Emmons L. Peck, was elected Vice Pres." The first secretary-treasurer of Pioneer Day was Lois Norton Curtis, who, be it known, was secretary-treasurer for all the Pioneer Day celebrations held in Clinton Township. We are all very much indebted to Lois (Norton) Curtis, not only for having recorded virtually all of the information that is known about Clinton Township's Pioneer Days, but also for having recorded, gathered and preserved a vast quantity of information about the history of Wayne County.